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To: GAETestimony
Cc: Senator Looney; Senator Crisco; Rep. Sharkey, J. Brendan; D'AGOSTINO; Rep. Porter, Robyn
Subject: PUBLIC HEARING TESTIMONY FOR SB1051 aLL

To All Committee Members:

I wish to voice my disapproval of **SB1051** as proposed.

I am the Democratic Registrar of Voters in Hamden.CT. I was elected in November, 2008. I have a very good working relationship with my Republican counterpart, and together we share the responsibilities in our office to ensure that all state laws are followed and that the citizens of Hamden are able to enroll, show up at the polls, are greeted by trained personnel and are able to vote freely.

Senate Bill 1051 proposes to eliminate one of the two elected registrars of voters and replace them with one appointed registrar, This bill as proposed lends itself to many problems.

- A single appointed registrar would be loyal/partisan to the person who appointed them. There would be much less of an incentive to make sure an election was conducted in a non partisan way, especially when the single registrar's job could depend on the victory of a candidate on the ballot,
- A single appointed registrar who is under the management of the Town Clerk would also have less incentive to be non partisan: in many cases Town Clerks are also elected officials, so they would expect the single registrar to favor their party. If the plan for a single appointed registrar is adopted, the minority party would have no voice in elections or town government – in many towns the registrar is the only minority party official working in a town or city hall. In the large cities, the Republican voice would be lost, and in many smaller towns, the Democrat voice would be lost.
- In towns where the majority party fluctuates back and forth, a single appointed registrar would constantly be replaced by the prevailing party, thus losing consistency in the office.

The reasons for two registrars of voters make more sense.

- In running elections, two sets of eyes (one from each party) need to be on everything, such as testing the memory cards, conducting supervised absentee ballots, and setting up the tabulators.
- There are many instances throughout Title 9 of the CT General Statutes where two registrars are required to carry out election and pre-election duties. All these statutes would have to be revised, either by eliminating the requirement for two sets of eyes, or requiring yet another level of bureaucracy by having "assistants" from each party carry out the duties

In short, in those cities and towns where there have been no problems and where both registrars get along with each other and are computer savvy, this bill is unnecessary and counterproductive to the election process.

Thank you for the opportunity to enter this testimony.
Rose V. Mentone
ROV, Hamden